The DEMON PRINCE of MOMOCHI HOUSE

7

Story & Art by
Aya Shouoto

CHAPTER 24

HAS AOI GROWN UP?

WHO IS THAT BEHIND YOU?

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The Mysterious Residents of Momochi House

Aoi Nanamori

When he was 7 years old, he wandered into Momochi House and was chosen as the Omamori-sama. He transforms into a nue to perform his duties, but it seems this role was meant for Himari.

Omamori-sama (Nue)

An ayakashi, or demon, with the ears of a cat, the wings of a bird, and the tail of a fox. As the Omamori-sama, the nue protects Momochi House and eliminates demons who make their way in from the spiritual realm.

Yukari

One of Omamori-sama's shikigami. He's a water serpent.

Ise

One of Omamori-sama's shikigami. He's an orangutan.

Himari Momochi

A 16-year-old orphan who, according to a certain will, has inherited Momochi House. As rightful owner, she has the ability to expel beings from the house.

Lesser Yokai

Momochi House: Story Thus Far

Himari is depressed after being rejected by Aoi, and she doesn't understand why he's more affectionate than usual. Himari meets the new substitute teacher at school named Takamura Nachi, who is an occult fanatic. He gives Himari the "Seeing Mirror" that transports her inside it. The mirror makes the sorrow in one's heart disappear. Himari's interactions with Aoi and the nue in the mirror world cause her to reevaluate her feelings. Despite being rejected, Himari resolves to do whatever she can to free him from Momochi House, but Aoi has fallen into a slump. Aoi's old friend Nekobaba comes to Momochi House and tries to get Aoi back to normal, but nothing seems to work. Himari follows Nekobaba's advice and investigates Aoi's family. She uses Mr. Nachi's old town map to find the Nanamori house...

KRIII

HE COLLECTS OLD THINGS AS A HOBBY.

WHY WOULD HE HAVE SOMETHING LIKE THIS? HE'S NEW TO THE AREA.

I WAS JUST A KID THEN.

KRIII

I SEE ...

KRIII

...ACCORDING TO MR. NACHI.

WELL... IT'S OVER TEN YEARS OLD...

KRIII

HOW OLD IS THIS MAP?

TMP

WE'RE HERE.

A MAP WITH THE NANAMORI NAME ON IT...!

Nanamori

日高

KRIII

I WONDER IF IT'S REAL.

YEAH...

I HOPE IT'S REAL.

KRII

KRII

KRII

AN OPEN LOT...

REM-NANTS...

THEY'RE QUITE OLD.

THESE ARE REMNANTS OF A HOUSE.

TMP

LOOK...

SO AOI'S HOME WOULD'VE BEEN...

KAGOME PARK IS SURROUNDED BY THOSE DARK TREES.

SEE OVER THERE?

NO ONE LIVES HERE ANYMORE THOUGH.

SOFTLY

WHAT ?

KRIII

KRIII

SO THAT'S ...

JUST NOW...

YOU SAW THE KAGOME PARK GHOST?!

HOW COULD THE TWO OF YOU GO THERE WITHOUT US?!

HUH?

NO, WE WENT FOR OTHER REASONS.

B-BMP

HIMARI...

...IS NEW HERE. SHE ISN'T FAMILIAR WITH THE AREA, SO I WAS GIVING HER A TOUR.

JUST LIKE IN THOSE OLD NEIGH-BORHOOD TALES...

I DON'T KNOW IF IT WAS A GHOST, BUT THERE DEFINITELY WAS A MAN WEARING A SCHOOL UNIFORM WITH A BLACK CAPE.

WELL...

WE JUST HAPPENED TO SEE HIM.

SO THERE REALLY IS A KAGOME PARK GHOST...

MRMR

OTHERS HAVE SAID THEY'VE SEEN HIM TOO.

LET'S PROVE IT...

...BY INVESTIGATING THE SITE.

...

HIMARI?

THE KAGOME PARK GHOST EXISTS.

BUT...

Research Project

I JUST FOUND HER RESEARCH NOTEBOOK IN THE HALLWAY...

OH DEAR...

An ayakashi prank perhaps?

KRIII

HIMARI IS OUT DOING RESEARCH FOR HER SUMMER PROJECT WITH HER FRIENDS.

OH...

KRIII

FLUT

OH...

Kagome Park

KAGOME PARK...?

AOI...

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

I'M FINE.

AOI...

I HAD THOUGHT YOUR SLUMP...

...WELL...

...WAS DUE TO FEELING GUILTY ABOUT HURTING HIMARI...

...BUT MAYBE IT'S SOME-THING...

...DEEPER THAN THAT.

YUKARI?

AOI...

HAVE YOU...

...LOST SOMETHING PRECIOUS TO YOU?

TMP

AND THE MOUNTAIN IS IN FRONT OF US.

IT'S BECAUSE WE'RE SURROUNDED BY TREES.

IT'S STILL EVENING, BUT IT'S REALLY DARK.

TMP

TMP

EEK!

OH, IT'S JUST A BIRD...

FWP

SO THIS IS...

...KAGOME PARK.

KLINK

KIDS USED TO PLAY HERE WHEN I WAS LITTLE...

...BUT STORIES ABOUT THE GHOST SCARED EVERYONE AWAY.

KREE

KREE

IT DOESN'T FEEL LIKE A PARK AT ALL.

IT'S AN OLD GHOST STORY...

THE GHOST WEARING A SCHOOL UNIFORM...

...WHISPERS TO A LONE CHILD.

DO YOU WANT TO LOOK?

ALL THE KIDS WHO DID HAVE DISAPPEARED.

HEY, LET'S GO HOME.

IT'S GETTING DARK.

BUT THAT'S WHEN HE APPEARS.

THAT'S WHAT WE CAME HERE FOR.

NO WAY... REALLY?

BUT WHAT WE SAW YESTERDAY...

OH NO... IT'S GOING TO RAIN.

!

MAYBE WE SHOULD GO.

I'VE SEEN A SEAL WITH THIS DESIGN BEFORE...

HEY, YOU GUYS...

FLUT

HUH?

I THINK WE'RE MISSING SOMEONE.

ONE...

HUH...?

SHAA

EEK!

THE WIND IS SO STRONG!

WHERE'S IT COMING FROM?

ONE...

TWO...

THREE...

FOUR!

FIVE, SIX...

SEVEN, EIGHT...

NINE IS AN UNLUCKY NUMBER.

WHOSE VOICE IS THIS?

WHAT?!

WHO IS SAYING THAT?

NO ONE HERE WAS TALKING.

YEEK!

!

IS...

LET'S TAKE ONE OUT...

...TO MAKE IT EIGHT.

KREEE

IS IT THE KAGOME PARK GHOST?!

SNFF

SNFF

SNFF

SNFF

SNFF

WE'RE STILL KIDS...

I GET IT NOW...

SHK

SHK

...TO SOME-THING BIGGER THAN US...

...THAT COULD SWALLOW US WHOLE.

WHO IS THAT BEHIND YOU?

WISH

BMF

HYAAAH!

BUSTED!

HUH...?!

HOW SILLY ARE YOU?

YOU PRETENDED TO DISAPPEAR, THEN YOU CHANGED WHILE EVERYONE WAS PREOCCUPIED.

I WAS SUSPICIOUS WHEN YOU CARRIED SUCH A LARGE BAG HERE.

YOU'RE SO SKINNY.

DID YOU THINK I COULDN'T TELL IT WAS YOU IN THE DARK?

LOOKS LIKE IT.

I-KNEW SOMETHING WAS ODD WHEN HAYATO COULD SEE THE GHOST YESTERDAY.

I SEE... IT WAS YOU, SENOO...

HA HA

IT REALLY IS...

THAT WAS WHY.

...PEOPLE WOULD COME FORWARD TO TALK ABOUT THEIR PAST MEMORIES. IT WOULD'VE HELPED OUR RESEARCH...

I THOUGHT IF I DRESSED LIKE THIS AND THE STORIES STARTED SPREADING AGAIN...

WHY...

...DID YOU DO IT?

YOU STUPID OCCULT FREAK!

...THE KAGOME PARK GHOST REALLY DOES EXIST!

BUT...

FWP

I KNOW...

...YOU AREN'T THE TYPE TO TRICK PEOPLE.

YOU SCARED EVERYONE. YOU SHOULD APOLOGIZE.

...

I'M SORRY.

THAT'S AN OLD CAPE.

WHERE DID YOU GET IT?

WELL, I GUESS IT WAS KIND OF FUN.

LET'S GO HOME.

YOU LOOK GOOD IN THAT.

Let me take your picture.

HUH...? I DON'T REMEMBER.

RUI DOESN'T SCARE EASILY.

HER FAMILY RUNS A DOJO.

No wonder!

ALL OF YOU HAVE KNOWN ONE ANOTHER FOR AGES.

ACTU-ALLY...

...I WAS ALWAYS A LONER.

BUT EVEN I THINK...

...SENOO HAS BEEN ACTING ODDLY TODAY.

THE KAGOME PARK GHOST DOES EXIST.

I BELIEVE WHAT HE SAID.

HM?

I TOLD YOU...

...I SAW HIM WHEN I WAS A KID.

NOW THAT I THINK BACK, IF I HAD SEEN HIM, HE COULDN'T HAVE BEEN A GHOST.

SO HE WAS SOMEONE IN DISGUISE? LIKE SENOO?

PROB-ABLY.

A MAN DRESSED IN BLACK.

CHILDREN WERE DISAPPEARING.

DO YOU WANT TO LOOK?

MAYBE...

...HAYATO'S LOST MEMORIES...

...

TO BE HONEST...

...I DON'T REALLY REMEMBER MUCH. I JUST GET A BAD FEELING WHEN I THINK ABOUT IT.

I CAN TELL I'M SLOWLY LOSING MY CHILDHOOD MEMORIES.

I HATE FORGET-TING...

...THESE THINGS.

WE ALL GROW UP AND FORGET.

...ARE RELATED TO WHAT HAPPENED TO AOI.

MEMORIES...

THAT'S WHY HE'S CLINGING TO THESE OLD GHOST STORIES.

MAYBE SENOO FEELS THE SAME WAY.

IT'S GETTING DARK. WANT ME TO WALK YOU HOME?

HUH?!

NO, I'M FINE. I ALWAYS WALK THIS WAY.

...SHOULD NEVER BE STOLEN.

FROM ANYONE.

I WOKE UP EARLY ONE DAY AND TRIED TO FIND YOUR HOUSE TO WALK YOU TO SCHOOL...

...BUT I GOT LOST.

WHEN WAS THAT?!

I must have a bad sense of direction.

SWF

AND...

WELL... THE GHOST WAS REVEALED, SO IT SHOULD BE SAFE.

AND IF YOU DO FIND IT...

THIS IS THE PATH TO MOMOCHI HOUSE.

TMP

TMP

TMP

TMP

TMP

...I TAKE THIS PATH.

THAT'S WHY...

BE CAREFUL ON THE WAY BACK!

MOMOCHI HOUSE IS HARD TO FIND.

See you tomorrow!

SWF

SWF

SWF

VOON

IMP

...IT'S BECAUSE...

GRIN

IS THAT YOU?

SENOO...

A CHILD WAS ONCE INVITED INTO MOMOCHI HOUSE.

I WONDER IF HE IS STILL INSIDE...

ARE YOU AN AYAKASHI?!

WHO ARE YOU?!

I FINALLY MADE IT.

THAT ISN'T SENOO'S VOICE.

WHO IS THAT BEHIND YOU...?

HIMARI! HAS SOMETHING HAPPENED?!

AOI!!

DASH

...TO ENTER MOMOCHI HOUSE!

I'LL NEVER ALLOW A STRANGER LIKE YOU...

SH

UP

THOOM

SHF

SO I HAVE TO MAKE YOU INVITE ME IN?

HIMARI!

HE'S OUTSIDE OUR TERRITORY.

IS THAT AN AYAKASHI?!

HM

THAT'S IRREL-EVANT.

URK...

GO FORTH, SHIKIGAMI.

DESTROY HIM.

WHAT...?

GRIP

...

STOP, NUE!

DON'T... ATTACK HIM!

THIS IS SENOO!

DON'T ATTACK!

GET OUT!

HEY, YOU!

GET OUT OF SENOO'S BODY!

ENISH

YOUR POWER HAS NO EFFECT OUTSIDE MOMOCHI HOUSE.

DO YOU WANT TO BE CRUSHED?

DON'T!

I DON'T WANT YOU TO HURT ANYONE!

...

BRING THEM BOTH IN.

...

YES!

YUKARI, ISE...!

BIND!

SWISH

SENOO!

ARGGH...

PURIFY!

DASH

SENOO...!

WE DIDN'T HURT THE KID.

STAY BACK.

SEE?

IT'S RELEASING HIM.

THERE.

...IS TAKING HUMAN FORM...?!

VOON

THE CAPE...

I'VE FINALLY BEEN INVITED INTO MOMOCHI HOUSE.

WISH

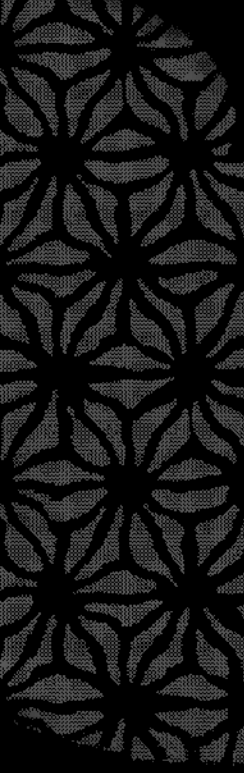
!

HAS AOI GROWN UP?

VOOM

WAFT
I GRATEFULLY ACCEPT...

...YOUR INVITATION TO ENTER.
SH



The DEMON PRINCE of MOMOCHI HOUSE

The DEMON PRINCE of MOMOCHI HOUSE

WOOO

CHAPTER
25

The Bird in the Cage

I DUMPED THE KID WITH THE GLASSES IN THE GARDEN.

WHAT'S GOING ON, YUKARI?

I TOLD ZUSHI AND THE LESSER YOKAI...

...TO CHECK THE HOUSE FOR ANYTHING UNUSUAL.

IT DOESN'T LOOK LIKE ANYTHING IS AMISS...

YOU IDIOT!

HE ENTERED MOMOCHI HOUSE! NEVER UNDERES-TIMATE A SHADOW!

GRAH

POOF

MAYBE THE BLACK SHADOW LEFT IN A FLURRY OF BLACK FEATHERS?

AOI...

I CAN'T SENSE HIM ANYWHERE.

BUT...

SNIFF

HAS AOI GROWN UP?

THE SHADOW SAID SOMETHING TO YOU.

DO YOU KNOW WHAT HE MEANT?

AOI, HAVE YOU HEARD OF THE KAGOME PARK GHOST?

THAT SHADOW...

NO... I DON'T.

I UNDERSTAND YOU'RE RESEARCHING IT.

I HEARD IT AT A PARK I USED TO PLAY AT AS A KID.

YEAH. IT'S AN OLD TALE.

IS THAT SHADOW AN AYAKASHI?

IT NEVER OCCURRED TO ME THAT HE WAS POSSESSED.

I THOUGHT HE WAS JUST FOOLING AROUND...

YES. SENOO WAS TRYING TO SCARE US BY DRESSING UP AS THAT GHOST.

Tsukumogami: The spirit of an old object that came into being as an ayakashi.

...MAY HAVE POSSESSED HIM.

A TSUKUMOGAMI LURKING IN THE OLD CAPE...

...

YEAH...

MASTER AOI!

I CHECKED THE ENTIRE HOUSE. NOTHING HAS CHANGED!

SMP

ALL SEALS ARE INTACT.

IT COULD BE MANY THINGS.

IT'S NOT UNUSUAL FOR SOMEONE ON THE VERGE OF BECOMING AN AYAKASHI TO WANT TO GET IN.

ENTERING MOMOCHI HOUSE WOULD GREATLY INCREASE HIS POWERS.

TSUKUMO-GAMI?

I WONDER WHY HE WANTED TO ENTER MOMOCHI HOUSE.

I WONDER IF HE IS STILL INSIDE...

I GRATE-FULLY ACCEPT YOUR INVITATION TO ENTER.

WHO, ME?

HIMARI, WHAT ABOUT YOU?

THANKS, ZUSHI, EVERYONE.

IS THERE ANYTHING IN HERE ONLY YOU CAN SEE?

REMEMBER WHEN KASHA SET THAT TRAP?

WELL...

I DON'T THINK I SEE...

...ANYTHING RIGHT NOW.

HYO

LET'S TAKE ANOTHER LOOK AROUND THE HOUSE.

I DON'T TRUST THE WORK OF AN AMATEUR.

GRAB

HMPH.

OH.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING IN HERE...

...YUKARI?

AH.

I WAS WONDERING IF THERE WERE ANY TSUKUMO-GAMI IN THESE OLD KIMONOS.

I WANTED TO ASK IF THEY SENSED ANY SIMILAR SPIRITS.

OLD KIMONOS, HUH?

LOOK.

THIS KIMONO IS FROM WHEN YOU WERE A CHILD.

YOU KEPT IT.

IT'S SO SMALL...

HOW IS THE HOUSE?

I CHECKED THE SEAL AT THE BACK. IT'S INTACT.

ISE AND THE OTHERS SAID THE SAME.

I SEE...

YOU SEEM WORRIED, YUKARI.

IT'S NOT THAT I FEEL A DARK PRESENCE...

...BUT...

...I FEEL UNEASY.

HYO

YUKARI...

AS IF...

...I'M HUMAN. ISN'T THAT ODD?

WHAT DOES IT FEEL LIKE TO BECOME AN AYAKASHI?

FROM EMOTIONS LIKE SADNESS.

BUT FIRST, I FELT DISTANT FROM EVERYTHING.

AND SUFFERING.

WELL...

...I CAN'T SAY FOR CERTAIN.

HOW ABOUT YOU, AOI?

HUH?

EVEN LOVE.

SINCE COMING TO MOMOCHI HOUSE...

...HAVE YOU LOST SOMETHING PRECIOUS?

IS IT...

...SOMETHING YOU'RE PREPARED TO LOSE?

MOMOCHI HOUSE...

A MAN OF SHADOWS...

THE KAGOME PARK GHOST...

BLACK FEATHERS...

I THOUGHT I HAD ACCEPTED IT.

I CAN'T REALLY REMEMBER...

VOON

HIMARI...

AOI?

WHY ARE YOU UP SO LATE?

I THINK... ...THE WIND IS KEEPING ME UP.

WHAT ABOUT YOU, HIMARI?

TAMAMO.

HE HAD A BAD DREAM BECAUSE OF WHAT HAPPENED EARLIER TODAY.

YAWN

I JUST PUT HIM BACK TO BED.

I GUESS AYAKASHI CAN HAVE NIGHTMARES TOO.

AOI!

CUDDLE

... HIMARI?

WILL YOU PUT ME TO BED TOO...

HUG

HAS AOI GROWN UP?

...AND CALLED ME "AOI," NOT "NUE."

THAT SHADOW LOOKED AT ME...

AOI?

FOR SOME REASON, I FEEL AFRAID.

IS IT POSSIBLE...

HAYATO TOLD ME THAT HE MET THE KAGOME PARK GHOST.

AOI.

...HE CAN'T BE HUMAN.

IF HE REMEMBERS WHO I AM...

HE MUST BE AN AYAKASHI.

BUT...

AN OLD TALE ABOUT CHILDREN DISAPPEARING...

I...

...YOU MET THE KAGOME PARK GHOST TOO?

...CAN'T REMEMBER.

...

SORRY!

WHY ARE WE TALKING ABOUT OLD GHOST STORIES?

IT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH YOU!

I MEAN...

SUFF

...YOU HAVEN'T DISAPPEARED.

YOU'RE RIGHT HERE.

YOU'RE JUST TRAPPED IN MOMOCHI HOUSE FOR NOW.

BLUSH

HUG

AOI...

IT'S NOT THAT.

I THOUGHT I'D SIMPLY FORGET EVERYTHING...

...AND ONE DAY...

I NEVER REALIZED THAT NOT BEING ABLE TO REMEMBER...

...WOULD BE SO PAINFUL.

...BECOME
AN
AYAKASHI.

BUT...

...IF I DO...

...CAN I TRULY...

...PROTECT YOU?

YUP

MAY I...

...KISS YOU?

W-WHY?!

WHAT?!

BLUSH

BECAUSE I WANT TO.

N-NO... IT WAS SETTLED...

AOI, YOU'RE THE ONE...

SORRY.

I KNOW...

...YOU DIDN'T SEE ME IN THAT WAY.

...WHO TOLD ME...

I KNOW I SAID THAT, BUT...

IS IT SOMETHING YOU'RE PREPARED TO LOSE?

OH MY.

HON-ESTLY...

WHEN WILL THE CAGED BIRD FLY FREE?

HOW LONG DO I HAVE TO WAIT?

I GUESS I HAVE NO CHOICE.

WHEN NIGHT FALLS...

"WHO IS THAT BEHIND YOU?"

DASH

IT'S COMING FROM THE GATE.

ONE OF OUR YOKAI?!

GYAAAAAH!

HIMARI, GO GET YUKARI AND ISE!

YES!

MASTER AOI!!

WHAT'S WRONG?

HYOOO

IT HAPPENED SO SUDDENLY...

KPAK

JOLT

WHY DID HE GET SO BIG...?

MAYBE HE ATE SOME-THING?

TAIKOMOCHI TURNED INTO THIS!

WE HAVE TO CALM HIM DOWN.

THIP

WHO IS THAT BEHIND YOU?

Hgf

ZUSHI?

GRIN

SWIP

ZUSHI ?!

GRAB

THIS ISN'T A JOKE.

THOK

THIS IS NO TIME FOR JOKING AROUND!

A TSUKUMO-GAMI COULDN'T DO THIS.

ARE YOU POSSESSED?! SNAP OUT OF IT!

RH H

VOOSH

THOOM

HM

OH

NOT YET...

I WON'T LET YOU TURN INTO THE NUE.

AOI...

REMEMBER.

THAT BLACK SHADOW.

LEAN

THIS VOICE...

WHERE

THE MORE YOU REMEMBER...

THAT'S RIGHT.

REMEMBER.

AOI!!

WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING, ZUSHI?!

STAY BACK!

WHAT'S GOING ON?!

?!

HYOO

...THE STRONGER OUR BOND WILL BECOME.

ON

I...

...CAN'T MOVE...

WHAT'S WRONG, YOU TWO?

Urgh.

HIMARI, STAND BACK.

...

THIS...

...IS NOT THE WORK OF AN AYAKASHI.

JUST WHAT...

...IS GOING ON?

WHO IS THAT BEHIND YOU?

I KNOW YOU.

I KNOW YOU.

GRIN

YOU FINALLY REMEMBERED ME.

?!

I FINALLY FOUND MY WAY IN.

THAT FACE...!

KRAKE

EEEE

SHING

KREEE

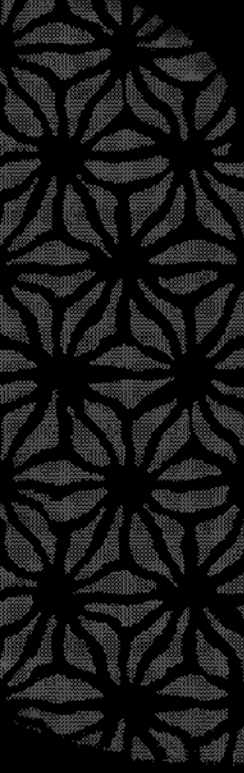
MR. NACHI...

IT WAS...

NACHI

...THE SOUND OF A DOOR WHICH SHOULD NOT BE OPENED.

Chapter 25/End



The DEMON PRINCE of MOMOCHI HOUSE

The DEMON PRINCE of MOMOCHI HOUSE

CHAPTER 26

HE WAS ALWAYS IN THE PARK.

YOU CAN SEE THAT, CAN'T YOU?

HE WAS ALWAYS ALONE TOO.

SO...

THIS IS OUR LITTLE SECRET.

HE BELIEVED ME AND SAID I WASN'T A LIAR.

HE TAUGHT ME ABOUT AYAKASHI.

WHY ARE YOU HERE?

CHAPTER 26

Who Is That Behind You?

YOU REMEMBERED ME. THAT CREATED A PATH FOR ME...

...TO FINALLY ENTER MOMOCHI HOUSE.

SO YOU REALLY HAVE BEEN TRAPPED IN HERE ALL THIS TIME...

POOR THING.

I'VE COME FOR YOU...

...AOI.

HUH ...?

I'LL SET YOU FREE...

...FROM THIS EVIL HOUSE THAT BINDS YOU.

SHING

HE CAN FREE AOI FROM MOMOCHI HOUSE?!

JUST WHO ARE YOU, MR. NACHI?

FWIP

I'M NOT A TEACHER.

THIS IS MY TRUE PROFES-SION.

BUT...

...I'M FAR REMOVED FROM ANYTHING HOLY.

I'M NOT ONE TO MERELY HOPE AND PRAY.

MR. NACHI...

YOU KNEW AOI?

IS IT TRUE YOU CAME TO MOMOCHI HOUSE TO FREE HIM?

TMP

THESE AYAKASHI ARE CONTROLLED BY ME.

THAT IS MY POWER.

OH, RIGHT. "SHIKIGAMI."

THAT'S WHAT YOU CALL YOUR SERVANTS.

THESE ARE SHIKIGAMI ...!

THAT'S RIGHT.

IS THAT WHY HE CAME...

..HERE?

AOI CAN LEAVE MOMOCHI HOUSE...

...AS MY SHIKIGAMI.

WHIP

I'VE WAITED A LONG TIME FOR THIS MOMENT.

HIMARI! STAY THERE!

AOI...!

TMP

COME, AOI.

SURRENDER TO ME MOMOCHI HOUSE...

...AND YOUR POWERS AS THE OMAMORI-SAMA.

WHIRL

WHY DIDN'T I REALIZE IT BEFORE?

IT WAS YOU ALL ALONG...!

HAS AOI...

EVER SINCE...

BLACK FEATHERS...

THE CROW CREST ON THAT PAPER SEAL...

...THAT DAY.

EVERYTHING...

...GROWN UP?

BECOME MY POWER.

SHOOF

WHY?

WHY?

THEY'RE SCAT-TERING...

KRIII

KRIII

THIS CHILD SEEMS TO BE POSSESSED BY EVIL VISIONS AND DELUSIONS.

HE DISTURBS HIS PARENTS BY SPEAKING OF MONSTERS AND SPIRITS.

WILL YOU GUIDE HIM TO THE PATH OF RIGHTEOUSNESS?

...

HE IS BURDENED WITH MYSTERIOUS POWERS.

RID YOURSELF OF EVIL THOUGHTS, TAKAMURA NACHI.

BUT I REALLY SEE THEM.

IN LIGHT AND IN DARK...

HERE AND THERE...

THEY EXIST.

I REFUSE TO BE CONTROLLED BY MERE AYAKASHI

POWER

ALL THIS

WILL NOT HELP ME OVERCOME WORLDLY DESIRES OR THOSE BEINGS

I WANT THE POWER TO CONTROL THEM!

A HOUSE REFERENCED IN ANCIENT LITERATURE

A HOUSE LOCATED ON THE BOUND-ARY BETWEEN THIS WORLD AND THE SPIRITUAL REALM

UP ON THE MOUN-TAIN

THERE'S AN OLD LEGEND ABOUT A HAUNTED HOUSE

"MOMOCHI HOUSE."

KIDS HAVE DISAPPEARED IN THESE MOUNTAINS. THEY SHOULD STAY AWAY.

INTER-ESTING.

THERE'S AN OLD LEGEND THAT A CHILD HAS SEEN THIS MYSTERIOUS HOUSE.

A CHILD, HUH?

THE HOUSE IS WAITING FOR THE RETURN OF ITS MASTER...

...THE OMA-MORI-SAMA.

AND THE HOUSE SHALL CHOOSE ITS MASTER.

I AM NOT SUIT-ABLE?

IT'S SAID TO BE GUARDED BY A NOBLE AYAKASHI UNLIKE ANY OTHER.

KNOCK

WHY?

WHY CAN'T I FIND IT?

GO FORTH.

LOOK FOR A LANDMARK FROM THE SKY—

YOU WON'T FIND IT.

SWOOSH

I NEED A CHILD...

A CHILD...

NOT THIS ONE...

A CHILD...

NOT THIS ONE.

THERE'S A MYSTERIOUS HOUSE.

NO...

HIS EYES ARE GOOD, BUT HE LACKS SPIRITUAL POWER.

DO YOU WANT TO TAKE A LOOK?

A CHILD...

ONE THAT SMELLS SWEET, LIKE POME-GRANATE.

ONE THAT AN AYAKASHI WOULD LIKE.

SHOULD I KIDNAP ONE OF THEM AT RANDOM?

IS HE YOUR FRIEND?

THAT BIRD...

YOU CAN SEE HIM?

I FOUND HIM.

THIS IS OUR LITTLE SECRET.

...

I DON'T WANT TO BOTHER THEM.

THOSE WHO CAN "SEE" ARE OSTRACIZED BY THEIR FAMILY.

THEY SAY...

...MY LIES ARE RUINING MY FAMILY.

POOR THING.

WHAT'S WRONG?

I... DON'T WANT TO GO HOME.

AND EVERY DAY...

...MORE BRUISES.

IT'S FINE.

YOU'RE HERE EVERY DAY. WHAT ABOUT YOUR FRIENDS FROM SCHOOL?

AFTER YOU GROW UP.
DON'T WORRY.
I'LL COME GET YOU SOON.
DON'T LOSE IT.
THIS IS A SPELL THAT WILL BIND US TOGETHER.
ALL YOUR TROUBLES WILL GO AWAY.
I'LL WAIT UNTIL YOUR POWERS GROW...
NOW...

SO...
MAYBE EVERYONE WILL BE HAPPY IF YOU DISAPPEAR.
THERE'S AN ABANDONED HOUSE IN THE MOUNTAINS.
WHY NOT...
...HIDE OUT THERE FOR A WHILE?
YOUR FAMILY WILL MISS YOU BEFORE LONG AND COME LOOKING FOR YOU.

SO...

MAYBE EVERYONE WILL BE HAPPY IF YOU DISAPPEAR.

THERE'S AN ABANDONED HOUSE IN THE MOUNTAINS.

WHY NOT...

...HIDE OUT THERE FOR A WHILE?

YOUR FAMILY WILL MISS YOU BEFORE LONG AND COME LOOKING FOR YOU.

AFTER YOU GROW UP.

DON'T WORRY.

I'LL COME GET YOU SOON.

THIS IS A SPELL THAT WILL BIND US TOGETHER.

DON'T LOSE IT.

I'LL WAIT UNTIL YOUR POWERS GROW...

ALL YOUR TROUBLES WILL GO AWAY.

NOW...

YOU USED MOMOCHI HOUSE'S POWER...
...TO DRAG OUT MY MEMORIES.
I DIDN'T...
...MEAN TO...
HUFF
WHAT...?

ENTER MOMOCHI HOUSE.

ENTER
MOMOCHI
HOUSE.

YOU USED MOMOCHI HOUSE'S POWER...

...TO DRAG OUT MY MEMORIES.

I DIDN'T...

...MEAN TO...

HUFF

WHAT...?

THAT'S...

...SO CRUEL...

HE WANTED AOI TO BECOME HIS SERVANT.

HE'S THE ONE WHO TRAPPED AOI INSIDE MOMOCHI HOUSE?

THE BOY'S SPIRITUAL POWERS ARE TOO STRONG.

HE WAS SUFFERING BECAUSE OF IT.

HE WAS A BAD INFLUENCE ON THE HUMAN REALM.

I SIMPLY PUT HIM WHERE HE BELONGED...

...TO MAINTAIN PEACE AND ORDER.

AND NOW...

IT WAS DONE BY A HUMAN.

WHAT...

...ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

...I WILL CONTROL HIM AS MY SHIKIGAMI AND USE HIS POWER TO ESTABLISH ORDER.

AN AYAKASHI DIDN'T DO THIS...

I DON'T WANT TO KNOW.

...

YOU UNDERSTAND, DON'T YOU, AOI?

YOU'RE SEEING MY MEMORIES AND THEY'RE RESONATING WITH YOU.

I WAS THE SAME.

I TOO WAS OSTRACIZED FOR HAVING SPIRITUAL POWERS.

OUR SOULS ARE VERY SIMILAR.

IT'S AS IF WE'RE A MIRROR IMAGE.

...

REEL

COME...

...AOI.

COME...!

FWSSH

HUFF

HUFF

THERE'S NO REASON TO RESIST.

UNDER MY CONTROL, YOU WILL STILL BE IMMUNE TO SORROW.

THAT'S WHY...

...I COULDN'T REMEMBER WHO YOU WERE. THAT'S WHY I COULDN'T IDENTIFY...

...WHO WROTE THOSE PAPER SEALS.

YOU WERE TAKING TOO LONG...

...TO INVITE ME IN. I NEEDED TO USE AN AYAKASHI.

AND FINALLY I FOUND THE RIGHT ONE.

BECOME MY SHIKIGAMI...
...AOI...
...OR RATHER...
... "OMAMORI-SAMA."
...ENTRUST EVERYTHING TO ME.
YOUR SORROW, YOUR SOLITUDE...
SHUNK
SISH
!
SO HE WAS THE ONE RESPONSIBLE FOR CURSING RYUJIN WITH THAT WRETCHED SEAL...
DAMN IT!
DAMN IT!
WHY CAN'T I MOVE?!
SHAK
THSSH

YOUR SORROW, YOUR SOLITUDE...

...ENTRUST EVERYTHING TO ME.

SISH

SHUNK

!

SO HE WAS THE ONE RESPONSIBLE FOR CURSING RYUJIN WITH THAT WRETCHED SEAL...

DAMN IT!

DAMN IT!

WHY CAN'T I MOVE?!

SHAK

THSSH

...
"OMAMORI-SAMA."

...AOI...
...OR RATHER...

BECOME MY SHIKIGAMI...

AOI!

...

STAY AWAY, HIMARI...

...

SHUNK

SUCH REBELLIOUS CHILDREN.

?!

HNG

BRING HER HERE.

SMP

YOUR RAGE...

...IS FORCING MY HAND.

LEAVE HER ALONE!

HUH?!

GRA B

HIMARI MOMOCHI...

GRIP

UNLIKE THE NAME YOU BEAR, YOU ARE POWERLESS.

I-

THE LEAST YOU CAN DO IS HELP ME.

...

OH

NOW...

...DELIVER A REQUIEM TO AOI.

EVEN HIMARI ...?

MY BODY...

...IS MOVING ON ITS OWN.

I...

NOT LIKE THIS.

NO...

YOU WILL TIE IT.

BLINDFOLD HIM.

IT WILL SYMBOLIZE MY OWNER-SHIP OF HIM.

EVEN IF THIS FREES AOI FROM MOMOCHI HOUSE...

I... WON'T...!

LUNGE

...

SHING

OBEY ME!

YES...

WHAT DID YOU DO TO HER?

I USED A KOTODAMA.

*Kotodama: Words that have spiritual power.

HIS WORDS CAST AN EVIL SPELL.

AS AN AYAKASHI, I CAN SEE IT.

...

A KOTO-DAMA...?

KRRK

NOW... ...THAT I KNOW...

POW

I WILL NOT ALLOW YOU TO DO ANYTHING MORE WITHIN MOMOCHI HOUSE.
YOU ARE AN EVIL BEING...
...WHO BROUGHT HARM TO BOTH RYUJIN AND AOI.
YUKARI!
FWOOSH
TROMP
URGH...
ME NEITHER!

Finish

YUKARI!

I WILL NOT ALLOW YOU TO DO ANYTHING MORE WITHIN MOMOCHI HOUSE.

YOU ARE AN EVIL BEING...

...WHO BROUGHT HARM TO BOTH RYUJIN AND AOI.

IROIR

RRK

URGH...

ME NEITHER!

AOI!

YUKARI, I'M FINE FOR NOW.

THE AYAKASHI OF MOMOCHI HOUSE ARE POWER-FUL.

BUT YOU CANNOT STOP ME.

JUST BRING ME THE-

SHIN

SHING

MAKE THE CONTRACT.

QUICKLY.

OH

ZWOOSH

DASH

TMP

THIS BLIND-FOLD...
...WILL MAKE YOU MY SHIKIGAMI.
TMP

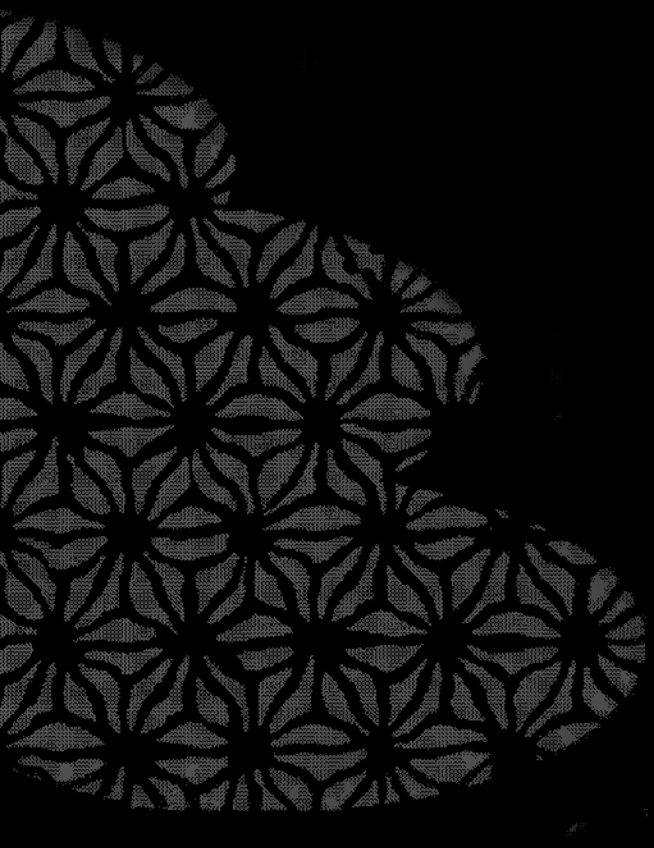
TMP

THIS BLIND-FOLD...

...WILL MAKE YOU MY SHIKIGAMI.

HIMARI...

Chapter 26/End



The DEMON PRINCE of MOMOCHI HOUSE

The DEMON PRINCE of MOMOCHI HOUSE

...I FELT...

FOR A FLEETING MOMENT...

CHAPTER 27

When Night Dawns

THAT IF I WERE TO LOSE MYSELF BY YOUR HAND,...

I COULD ACCEPT IT

OH

PLIP

LET'S GO LOOK FOR THEM...

...AOI.

GRIT

I'M SORRY.

I...

I'M GOING TO FIND A WAY FOR YOU TO LEAVE MOMOCHI HOUSE!

HIMARI...

FORGIVE ME, HIMARI.

YOU'VE ALWAYS BEEN MY LIGHT.

OH...

OH...

BLUSH

I... TOLD YOU...

HIMARI...

!

NO KISSING!!

POW

THE FEATHERS...!

OOH

SHRK SHRK SHRK SHRK

AOI!!

YUKARI!

IMPOS-SIBLE.

THE KOTODAMA HAS BEEN BROKEN?

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT? HERE'S WHAT YOU WANTED.

THANK YOU, YUKARI.

TAKE CARE OF HIMARI.

AOI...

I'M FINE NOW.

VHHM

YOUR POWER BRINGS ORDER TO A CHAOTIC WORLD.

IT CONTROLS PEOPLE AND AYAKASHI ALIKE...

NACHI.

...SUBMIT TO YOU.

YOUR KOTODAMA BINDS AND MAKES PEOPLE...

BUT I THINK YOU MUST HAVE BEEN LONELY.

...

WHAT ...?

WHEN I WAS LITTLE...

...YOU PROBABLY NEVER USED YOUR KOTODAMA ON ME.

EVEN SO...

...I CAME TO SEE YOU EVERY DAY.

WE HAVE THE SAME POWERS.

...YOU WERE LONELY, JUST LIKE I WAS.

BECAUSE I KNEW...

YOU WANTED TO SEND...

...SOMEONE LIKE YOURSELF INTO MOMOCHI HOUSE.

WE SHARED THE SAME SOLITUDE...

...AND PAIN.

YOU COULDN'T ENTER THIS HOUSE...

...THAT RESIDES BETWEEN THE TWO REALMS.

YOUR GRIEF...

THIS IS A SPELL THAT WILL BIND US TOGETHER.

DON'T LOSE IT.

THESE... SHFF

...ARE THE CLOTHES I WORE WHEN I CAME HERE.

I CAME JUST AS I WAS. THE ONLY THING I BROUGHT...

...WAS THIS.

THUP

A SORCERER MUST REMAIN HIDDEN.

NOT EVEN YOU.

NOT EVEN...

...MY FAMILY.

ALL YOUR TROUBLES WILL GO AWAY.

BECAUSE OF THIS SEAL...

...I COULDN'T REMEMBER ANYTHING FROM MY PAST.

...TO BE BOUND BY YOU ANY LONGER.

BUT I REFUSE...

HIS FAMILY...

YOU WANTED TO FORGET, DIDN'T YOU?

...WOULD HAVE DISAPPEARED.

ALL YOUR GRIEF AND SORROW...

WHY?

EVEN SO...

...PAIN.

...RUN FROM...

I MUSTN'T...

RRIP

I MUST BE TRULY STRONG...

...IN ORDER TO PROTECT YOU.

PHo

oo

THIS IS
THE POWER
I CHOSE.

CAPTURE HIM!

TO YEARN...

SO BEAUTIFUL...

SO THIS IS...

...THE NUE.

...AND BE YEARNED FOR...

A NOBLE AYAKASHI WHO BELONGS TO NO ONE.

...

WHIP

SWOOSH

WHIP

YOU CANNOT REACH ME.

KISS

BEEP

GOOD-BYE.

BAM

HYOO

OO

OO

DASH

HIMARI...

...

IS IT OVER?

POFF POFF

...

ARE YOU SAD?

I CAN'T TELL.

WHAT ARE YOU THINKING?

TMP

I REFUSE TO CRY.

IF AOI ISN'T CRYING, NEITHER WILL I.

I'M NOT ANGRY.

YOU HAVE A STRANGE LOOK ON YOUR FACE. ARE YOU ANGRY?

THEN...

...YOU'RE NOT MAD ABOUT THE KISS?

SHFF

HMM...

YOU DIDN'T HAVE A CHOICE.

THAT WAS A SPUR-OF-THE-MOMENT THING...

...TO SNAP ME OUT OF THAT SPELL, RIGHT?

BLU SH

TH-THAT WAS...

NO FAIR SAYING THAT AS THE NUE!

DASH

...I SIMPLY WANTED TO?

WHAT IF I WERE TO TELL YOU...

NOT MY MEMORIES AS A HUMAN BEING...

NOR MY PAIN.

...ANYTHING FROM ME.

MOMOCHI HOUSE DIDN'T TAKE...

...

I WANTED THEM TO BE TAKEN AWAY.

BUT YOU SAW THROUGH ME...

...AS I EXPECTED.

EVEN SO...

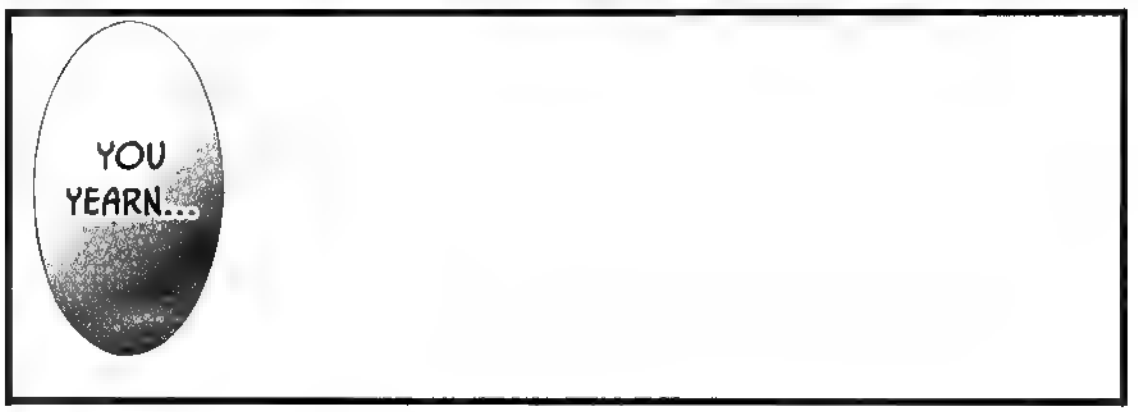
HYOOO

...SLOWLY...

...AND ARE YEARNED FOR...
BUT YOU'RE STILL ONLY HUMAN.

...
WHERE AM I?

WHAT...
...WAS I DOING?


YOU YEARN...

YOU CALLED HIM YOUR MIRROR IMAGE...

BUT NOT EVERY HUMAN CAN BECOME AN AYAKASHI.

THOSE WHO STRAY FROM THE PATH OF HUMANS...

...AND CANNOT BECOME AYAKASHI...

...ARE KNOWN AS OGRES.

CROWS!

ARE YOU THERE?!

OGRES ARE STILL HUMAN.

WHY...?

ONLY HUMANS CAN BECOME OGRES.

MY SPIRITUAL POWERS...

HOW FITTING FOR A HERETIC LIKE YOU.

NOW GO ROAM.

ROAM IN AN ENDLESS WORLD OF SUFFERING.

YOU SHOULD TRANSFORM BACK...

...AND REST.

MASTER NUE.

IT'S OKAY, AOI.

I'LL LOOK AWAY.

...

NO.

WHY...

AOI...?

...DID I REMEMBER THOSE WORDS?

YOU MUSTN'T...

YOU MUSTN'T LOOK AT ME.

IT SEEMS...

...I CAN NO LONGER TRANSFORM BACK.

The DEMON PRINCE of MOMOCHI HOUSE

The DEMON PRINCE of MOMOCHI HOUSE

■ This is Volume 7. Aoi's story now begins to unfold. There is an old saying that children belong to God until they are seven years old. Up until this point, his story has been veiled in ambiguity.

Even some phrases in daily life have sinister nuances. For example, *ojamashimasu* ("thank you for having me") contains some frightening kanji. (*Ja* means "evil" and *ma* means "demon.") If you trace the roots of nursery songs, children's games and seasonal customs, you will often find they are related to demons and evil...

These uniquely Japanese customs are born of our desire to come to terms with such things. I like them.

The undefined categorization of "ayakashi" is the same. Something that exists where there is nothing.

That's what I'd like to portray...

Well, well! *The Demon Prince of Momochi House* is going to become a stage play! When I first heard the news, I couldn't believe it. It was unimaginable to me, and I was filled with excitement and curiosity. The color spread at the beginning of this volume was a manifestation of the joy I felt at that time.
Since then, the cast was announced, the script was written, the music was created (J-rock!) and rehearsals began. A 2.5 dimensional world of *Momochi House* is emerging and it is so exciting! I'm so happy that I'll be able to see this brilliant play with all you Momochi fans. Thank you to all who were involved in this endeavor and for your continued support!

Aya Shouoto
Summer 2015

The DEMON PRINCE of MOMOCHI HOUSE

<STAFF>
NORIE.O / AYA.M / MAIKO.Y
KAZUKO.M / KANAE.S / NAOKO.K

The DEMON PRINCE of MOMOCHI HOUSE

Momochi House Illustration Gallery

Asuka Magazine Cover, December 2014

Asuka Magazine Cover, April 2015

Original Jacket Illustrations for Drama CDs 1–3

Original Merchandise Illustrations (Incense)

Asuka Magazine Supplement Illustration Collection, January 2015

Asuka Magazine Preview Illustration, March 2013

Momochi House is being adapted for the stage! In celebration, I drew Nue on the cover striking a pose as if he were a theatrical actor. Drawing Nue is always a challenge because his ears, which are essential, are hard to see depending on the design. And you only ever catch a glimpse of his tail...

-Aya Shouoto

Aya Shouoto was born on December 25. Her hobbies are traveling, staying at hotels, sewing and daydreaming. She currently lives in Tokyo and enjoys listening to J-pop anime theme songs while she works.

The Demon Prince of Momochi House

Volume 7
Shojo Beat Edition

Story and Art by Aya Shouoto

Translation JN Productions
Touch-Up Art & Lettering Inori Fukuda Trant
Design Fawn Lau
Editor Nancy Thistlethwaite

MOMOCHISANCHI NO AYAKASHI OUJI Volume 7
© Aya SHOUOTO 2015
First published in Japan in 2015 by KADOKAWA CORPORATION, Tokyo.
English translation rights arranged with KADOKAWA CORPORATION, Tokyo.

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Printed in the U.S.A.

Published by VIZ Media, LLC
P.O. Box 77010
San Francisco, CA 94107

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1
First printing, January 2017

www.viz.com

RATED T FOR TEEN
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